

Tips to Stay Cool This Summer



Keep Cool Tips for Everyone

- Stay in air-conditioned space at home, the library, the mall, or a Cooling Center.
- Schedule outside activities before noon or in the evening. Avoid or minimize physical exertion.
- Drink lots of water. Avoid alcohol beverages and caffeinated drinks.
- Close shades and curtains by 9:00 am, especially on windows facing south or west.
- Keep lights off or turned down.
- Take cool baths or showers.
- Wear loose, light cotton clothing.
- Do not eat heavy meals. Avoid cooking with your oven.
- Do not sit in a hot car, even for a short time. Never leave a child or pet in a car.

Keep Cool at Home AND Save Energy Costs

- Install a programmable thermostat. Make sure it automatically adjusts to a higher temperature (above 78 degrees) when you are not home or sleeping.
- Set thermostat at 78 degrees or higher. You save 3-5 percent on your air conditioning cost for **each** degree you raise the thermostat.
- Replace filters often, even in the summer. Check furnace and air filters monthly or as recommended by the manufacturer.
- Keep your air conditioning duct vents clean and clear. Make sure furniture or drapes are not blocking air vents or keeping cool air from circulating freely.
- Buy an Energy Star air conditioner. It can save you up to 10% over one that doesn't have the label. Have an air-conditioning technician or energy auditor determine the right size unit for the space.
- Plant trees or shrubs to block out direct rays of sun.
- Ceiling fans help your air conditioner move cool air around the home.
- Turn off air and open your windows for a cross breeze on cooler evenings.
- Replace light bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs (CFL's) CFLs use about ¼ as much electricity and last ten times longer than incandescent bulbs.
- If you do not have air conditioning, use portable or ceiling fans. At night they help rid the house of the heat from the daytime sun and make you feel about four degrees cooler than the actual temperature. However, turn off fans when you are not in the room. The fans cool you, not the air.

The Department of Community Services & Development and your local Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) service provider join together in urging caregivers and families of frail adults, seniors, or young children to take extra precautions to help them stay cool and safe during a hot summer. Learn the warning signs of heat stroke and heat exhaustion and call for immediate medical assistance if you suspect a friend or family member is suffering from either.

Other Resources

The State Department of Aging and County Departments of Aging and Adult Services can provide information for seniors and others at risk from the heat about **Cooling Centers** that are available in local communities during heat emergencies. Contact your County Department of Aging and Adult Services or call the Area on Aging toll-free at 1 (800) 510-2020 for the location of Cooling Centers in your area.

Energy Assistance - LIHEAP

LIHEAP is a federally funded program that assists low-income households with their heating and cooling needs. Households with seniors, the disabled, or families with young children who meet federal income guidelines may be eligible for assistance, including Bill Payment Assistance, Energy Crisis Assistance, and Weatherization Assistance. Contact the California Department of Community Services and Development toll-free at 1 (866) 675-6623 or look online at www.csd.ca.gov for the local service provider in your area.

Utilities

Local and State utility companies have a number of programs and services to assist you during hot weather months. Call or contact your utility company and ask about alternative rates for energy for low income eligible customers and free services such as weatherization, energy audits, and products such as compact florescent bulbs or shade trees.

